

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

DATE: August 11, 2005

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 6:18 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Attending Members

Monroe Gray, Jr., Chairman
Vernon Brown
Bob Cockrum
Susie Day
Dane Mahern
Earl Salisbury

Absent Members

Ron Gibson
William Oliver

BUDGET HEARING

Overview – Director
Administration Division
Park Maintenance Division

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

The Parks and Recreation Committee of the City-County Council met on Thursday, August 11, 2005. Chairman Monroe Gray, Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. with the following members present: Vernon Brown, Bob Cockrum, Susie Day, Dane Mahern, and Earl Salisbury. Absent were Ron Gibson and William "Duke" Oliver.

Overview – Director

Joseph Wynns, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), showed a Powerpoint presentation, which is attached in detail as Exhibit A, and illustrates the following:

- The Department's mission
- The various Parks facilities
- The Department's accomplishments
- 2005-2006 Budget Comparison
- Budget Summary minus 10% reductions
- Ten percent Budget Reduction Impacts
- 2006 Service Commitments

Mr. Wynns noted that the proposed 2006 budget is \$30,040,470. This information, along with the 2005-2006 budget comparison, is located on page 5 of Exhibit A.

Councillor Brown asked how the DPR lease program works in cooperation with the restaurants. Mr. Wynns responded that currently two restaurants are under lease, and DPR is negotiating with the third (Whistle Stop). He said first DPR establishes a contract, which has two to three extensions. If there is a 3-year contract, the restaurant can have two renewals, and after the two renewals are up, DPR goes back out to the public for a Request For Proposal (RFP). Market-value rates are considered, the lease is appraised, and a contract is created with the owner. This money goes to the DPR Fund.

Councillor Mahern asked about street tree maintenance responsibility. Mr. Wynns explained that DPR is responsible for every tree between the sidewalk and the street. If the tree is between the sidewalk and a home, then the tree is the homeowner's responsibility.

Councillor Cockrum referred to page 14 of the Executive Summary, which reflects the property tax rate since 1997. He noted that there has been a change in details in the Park General Fund rate, which is reduced from .0468 to .0448. The Controller supports this.

Chair Gray asked if all the restaurants are current with rent. Mr. Wynns responded in the affirmative. He added that DPR is currently negotiating very heavily with the Whistle Stop.

Chair Gray asked about mowing and if some of it has been privatized. Mr. Wynns answered in the affirmative. Chair Gray asked how it affects individual contracts. Mr. Wynns answered that it does affect them quite a bit, but DPR is trying to take most of the mowing back in-house as possible. He added that he feels they can contract 50% less than last year. The contracts will be in place until September, and at that time, some will be cancelled. This should create approximately \$70,000 to \$80,000 in savings.

Administration Division
Page 14, City Budget Book

Wayne Simpson, Chief Financial Officer, DPR, discussed some of the budget reduction impacts. He stated that DPR eliminated one Customer Service Representative (CSR) position. The effect of this will be some decrease in response time to servicing customers. Reduction in mowing will produce some savings by beginning to reduce mowing cycles.

Mr. Simpson noted that DPR controls all Utility dollars out of the Administration Division, and these will be checked carefully, as well as taking steps to control services as much as possible. There will also be a reduction in system upgrades for the class enhancement system. He also discussed some service commitments for 2006, which includes a facility guide for marketing.

Mr. Simpson said that DPR is going to apply for 35 new grants next year for various programs and services.

Councillor Cockrum asked where DPR stands on the timing of the next round of grants. Mr. Wynns answered that the next round of grants will probably be in 2007. The last project, which is about to be completed, is the Earth Discovery Project at Eagle Creek Park.

Councillor Mahern asked how DPR plans to generate more interest in Park Rangers. Mr. Wynns answered that anyone interested may contact DPR and they will be forwarded to the Reserve circuit.

Councillor Cockrum referred to Character 03 and asked various questions concerning certain subobjects:

- Subobject 303 (Consulting Services): Mr. Simpson said this is for Marketing Services for radio advertising. DPR has a purchase order for a whole year for this subobject and is proposing the same budget for next year.

- Subobject 309 (Technical Services): Mr. Simpson explained that this is an allocation decrease for security for the City-County Building.
- Subobject 335 (Information Technology): Mr. Simpson said this is an Information Services Agency (ISA) allocation reduction, as well as a decrease in upgrades per DPR's 10% reduction.
- Subobject 338 (Infrastructure Maintenance): Mr. Simpson said that DPR moved some of the mowing savings and mowing contracts here.
- Subobject 353 (Utilities): Councillor Cockrum asked how these costs are being lowered and maintained. Mr. Simpson answered that \$134,000 has been reduced from the base year, but DPR is still making evaluations in every possible area, including street lights.

Chair Gray asked if DPR still contracts with Johnson Controls. Mr. Wynns answered in the affirmative.

- Subobject 368 (Insurance Premiums): Councillor Cockrum asked if the \$159,000 spent in the first six months reflects a full year contract. Mr. Simpson answered in the affirmative.

Councillor Cockrum had a question concerning Character 05.

- Subobject 580 (Cost Pool Allocation): Councillor Cockrum asked what Cost Pool Allocation means. Mr. Simpson said this is an allocation between DPR and Golf. This golf money comes to DPR to support various programs.

Park Maintenance Division
Page 17, City Budget Book

Steve Waltz, Administrator, listed some of the Division's accomplishments, which include:

- Bringing more work in-house where it was previously contracted
- Utilizing volunteer groups (youth, church, etc.) for clean-ups, etc.
- Increased land stewardship
- Removed 950 hazardous trees
- Horticulture – went perennial

- Reduced equipment purchases
- Reduced overtime

Mr. Waltz noted that although there will be a slight reduction in services (on paper), it should be relatively unnoticeable.

Councillor Cockrum referred to Character 01 and asked various questions concerning certain subobjects:

- Subobject 101(Salaries – Weekly): Mr. Simpson explained that this is a negotiated contract/pay increase per contract for Association of Federal, State, and County Municipal Employees (AFSCME).
- Subobject 185 (Worker's Compensation): Kim Diller, Controller's Office, explained that for the 2005 budget the amount was reduced because there was enough in the fund to get through 2005. DPR is increasing back up for 2006.

Councillor Cockrum had questions regarding Character 02, specifically reductions in Subobjects 210 (Materials and Supplies), 215 (Building Materials and Supplies), and 220 (Repair Parts, Tools, and Accessories). Mr. Waltz said reductions could be comfortably made in all of these areas. He added that one of the emphases on Capital Improvement programming next year will be on infrastructure maintenance, which will address any concerns about reductions in these particular areas.

Councillor Cockrum had questions concerning Character 03.

- Subobject 303 (Consulting Services): Mr. Simpson explained that the \$34,000 is a reduced agreement with Indianapolis Downtown, Incorporated (IDI) next year. The \$72,000 for this year is due to a missed payment from 2004.
- Subobject 309 (Technical Services): Mr. Simpson explained that this is the portable toilet reductions.
- Subobject 338 (Infrastructure Maintenance): Mr. Simpson said this is a combination of the mowing reduction and the tree maintenance reduction.
- Subobject 362 (Building Maintenance and Repair): Mr. Waltz said this reduction is primarily contractual landscaping.

Councillor Cockrum asked about Character 05, Subobject 520 (Fleet Services). Mr. Simpson said this dollar amount reflects the increase in fuel.

Parks and Recreation Committee
August 11, 2005
Page Five

Councillor Mahern asked about Character 03, Subobject 353 (Utilities). Mr. Simpson stated that he does not think this charge should be in this particular subobject; rather, it belongs in Character 02.

Without any further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the Parks and Recreation Committee of the City-County Council was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Monroe Gray, Jr., Chair
Parks and Recreation Committee

MG/hfs